

aid than plodding through each of the descriptions in turn to see which fits best; or fifty-three species of *Argynnis* in a similar plight except that here the rough but fairly good figures of the under side of a hind wing materially aid the comparison; or again eighty-six species of *Pamphila* where even figures of a single wing are wanting in more than two thirds of the species! For such characteristics as these, no possible excellence in the descriptions or the sequence, or even in the illustrations could possibly atone. It is planned upon wrong lines—a dreary guide to a delightful study. Better a single life-history well worked out, to beget a wish to learn more, than the whole of it. Butterflies are not lifeless postage-stamps, and should not be treated as such.

A very lively and interesting account is given in the last number of the *Journal of the Cincinnati society of natural history of the wanderings and collections of a "Cincinnati boy in the tropics,"* William Doherty, who entirely without funds has wandered all through the east, making fine collections in natural history, especially insects, and paying his way by their sales. Through perils and adventures innumerable he seems so far to have escaped with his life; "my beggar-like and dilapidated garb was my safeguard against robbers," he says, "and my running after butterflies was calculated to impress them that I was a harmless lunatic and so I got through where a more pretentious personage might have failed."

Reference was made in our June number, p. 100, to the reported death of *Künckel*, and discredit given to the story that he had been overcome by locusts in Algiers. It now appears that the entire story must have been a fabrication, for records have reached us of two or three meetings of the French entomological society (of which he was once president) subsequent to the date of his reported death, and no sort of reference to such an event appears, though at least one necrological notice is given; moreover *Künckel* has

since that date been appointed upon a committee of the society, and presented papers both to it and to the French Academy! We observe that *Entomological news* publishes the telegram from Algiers as if it had no doubt of its truth.

PROCEEDINGS OF SOCIETIES.

CAMBRIDGE ENTOMOLOGICAL CLUB.

14 February, 1890.—The 151st meeting of the Club was held at 156 Brattle St., Mr. S. H. Scudder in the chair.

The annual report of the librarian, postponed from the January meeting, was read and accepted. The auditors announced that the report of the treasurer was correct, and it was accepted.

Dr. H. A. Hagen asked the opinion of those present concerning books on entomology for the use of beginners and amateurs. Our common insects, *Half-hours with insects*, and *Entomology for beginners*, by Dr. Packard, and *Comstock's Introduction* were mentioned as the most available.

Mr. S. H. Scudder read from a letter of Mr. James Fletcher an account of damage done to the pine staves of the water pipes of the Ottawa (Can.) water system. The pipes have been in use fifteen years. The destruction is supposed to be due first to the decaying of a very thin layer of the surface of the wood through the chemical action of river water, and then to the removal of the decayed surface by aquatic beetles. Beetles belonging to *Dryops* and *Macronychus* were found in the injured wood; also larvae provisionally referred to the same genera.

Mr. Scudder read an account of the habits of spiders, by Jonathan Edwards, written in the last century, and recently published in the *Andover Review*.

Mr. Scudder also read a letter from Mr. E. A. Smyth, Jr., giving his observations on the habits and relative abundance of several colliads found in North and South Carolina. (See *Psyche*, v. 5, p. 334.)